

REMARKS

With the entry of the amendments, claims 20-23 and 42-47 are pending in this application. All other claims have been cancelled without prejudice. Favorable consideration of claims 20-23 and 42-47 is requested.

At the outset, applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 21, 42-44 and 47 (on page 5 of the Office Action). In line with this indication, and as suggested by the Examiner, claim 21 has been amended to independent status and incorporates the subject matter of the base claim (claim 18) and any intervening claims (there are none, i.e., claim 21 depended directly from independent claim 18). All other claims that depended from claim 18 have been amended to depend from amended claim 21. No new matter has been added by the amendments.

Applicant submits that the foregoing claim amendments render the rejections moot and place the application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: /Duane M. Byers/

Duane M. Byers

Reg. No. 33,363

DMB:lfo
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100